

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANA 01747 091317Z
ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1173

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T SANA 1747

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, YE

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM AL-AHMAR

BEGIN SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED LONG LETTER FROM ABADALLAH BIN HUSSAIN AL-AHMAR CASTIGATING AL-HAMDI AND, MOREPOLITELY, USG

FOR ITS SUPPORT OF INCREASINGLY LEFTEST SANA REGIME.

AL-AHMAR SAYS HE FORESEES EXPLOSION AND INVITES AMBASSADOR TO KHAMR TO DISUCSS WHAT MIGHT BE DONE.

COMMENT BY SETPEL. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY POUCHING TO DEPARTMENT TRANSLATION OF LONG AND SOMETIMES INTERESTING LETTER FROM HASHID TRIBAL CONFEDERATION HEAD ABDALLAH BIN HUSSAIN AL-AHMAR. LETTER WAS DELIVERED TO AMBASSADOR'S HOUSE 7 MAY AT NIGHT BY HAND AND IS, WE ASSUME, GENUINE AND NOT PROVOCATION.

2. LETTER IS QUITE LONG, AND IN PREAMBLE PROTESTS AT LENGTH ANTI-COMMUNIST AND PRO-WEST SENTIMENTS OF AL-AHMAR, USING ILLUSTRATIONS FROM LAST TWENTY YEARS.

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3. OF MORE INTEREST IS LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF CRUCIAL ROLE OF TRIBES IN REVOLUTION. THERE WERE ONLY ABOUT 2000) SOLDIERS IN THE 1 YEAR PERIOD, HE SAYS; SANA WAS REALLY DEFENDED BY TRIBES WHO FOUGHT NOT FOR BENEFITS BUT FOR PRINCIPLES. AL-AHMAR GOES ON TO ASSERT THAT AL-HAMDI REGIME NOW CONTROLS ONLY HALF OF COUNTRY, AND THIS LIMITED CONTROL WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE WERE IT

NOT FOR RESTRAINT OF TRIBAL OPPOSITION TO AL-HAMDI.
AL-AHMAR LEAVES LITTLE DOUBT ABOUT HIS VIEW OF BALANCE
OF POWER BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND TRIBES, CLAIMING
REGIME IS UNPOPULAR AND ITS MILITARY ARM RACKED WITH
DESERTIONS. TRIBAL REGIONS, BY CONTRAST, HAVE
"STABILITY AND COMFORT TO GREATER DEGREE THAN REGIONS
WHICH HAVE SUBMITTED TO SUBJUGATION AND TYRANNY OF
POWER." AL-AHMAR POINTEDLY REFERES AT ONE POINT TO
HIS LETTER OF 13 JUNE 1974 WHICH, HE SAYS, BROUGHT
DOWN GOVERNMENT OF QADI ABDAL RAHMAN AL-IRYANI BY
THREATENING A TRIBAL MARCH ON SANA.

4. AL-AHMAR CONTRASTS NEED AND DESIRE OF TRIBES FOR
DEVELOPMENT COOPREATION WITH WEST, DEMOCRACY, AND ORDER
WITH "DECEITFUL" AND "UNDEMOCRATIC" REGIME OF
AL-HAMDI, WHODEPENDS ON "TERROR, MILITARY RULE AND
INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS." AL-HAMDI, HE SAYS, IS "TWO-
FACED" MAN WHO PLAYS OFF EAST AGAINST WEST IN INTEREST
HIS OWN RULE BUT LEFTISTS ARE INCREASINGLY DOMINANT IN

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND FOROEGN TIES AND EXTREMISM OF
THESE MEN BODE ILL FOR US ANDSAUDI INTERESTS HERE AS
WELL AS PEACE IN LAND. LEFTISTS, ACCORDING TO A-AHMAR,
WANT TO PROVODE AN "EXPLOSION".

5. REAL ISSUE, OF COURSE, IS "SINGLE AMBITIOUS PERSON"
WHOM US AND SAUDIS SUPPORT LAVISHLY AND FOOLISHLY.
AL-AHMARSAYS OMINOUSLY THAT "MATTERS HAVE SURPASSED
LIMITS HIS ABILITY TO CONTROL THEM", AND THAT "IT IS
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POSSIBLE THAT SITUATION WILL GET OUT OF HAND." "AL-
HAMDI IS AT AN END, BURNED OUT." USG CAN STRENGTHEN
HIM FOR ONLY YEAR OR TWO, BUT OF COURSE AT GREAT COST
TO ITS INTERESTS AND REPUTATION. TO DISCUSS THESE
MATERS, AL-AHMAR CONCLUDES AMBASSADOR SHOULD COME
TO KHAMR, AL-AHMAR'S HOME ON ROAD NORTH TO SAADAH.
SCOTES

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 09-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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